The listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (original) A method of adding a new contact to an electronic contact information database comprising the steps of:

a)   recognizing data stored in an electronic contact information database of a user system as data relating to contact information of a new contact;

b)   extracting from the stored data a contact destination of the new contact;

c)   automatically sending a message including a request for additional contact information to the contact destination of the new contact; and

d)   upon receiving a return message including additional contact information from the new contact, automatically updating the contact information database with the additional contact information.

2.   (original)   A method according to claim 1 wherein the stored data is provided manually by the user.

3.   (original)   A method according to claim 1 wherein the stored data is provided automatically by an electronic message application in execution on the user system.

4.   (original)   A method according to claim 1 wherein the message is an electronic message and wherein step d) includes the step of:

automatically extracting the additional contact information from the received return electronic message.

5.   (original)   A method according to claim 4 wherein the user is a subscriber to a contact list update service and wherein the new contact is other than a subscriber to the contact list update service.

6.   (original)   A method according to claim 5 comprising the steps of:

verifying the authenticity of each electronic message received at a system of the new contact.

7.   (original)   A method according to claim 6 wherein the electronic message comprises message body text containing contact information for at least one contact information field for verification.

8.   (original)   A method according to claim 6 wherein the return message is generated by an automated reply filter in execution on the contact system using contact information retrieved from a memory accessible to the automated reply filter.

9.   (original)   A method of adding a new contact to an electronic contact information database of a user system comprising the steps of:

using an electronic message application in execution on a system of the new contact, receiving an electronic message transmitted from the user system via a communication network;

using an automated reply filter cooperatively in execution with the electronic message application, intercepting the received electronic message prior to storage thereof within an inbox of the electronic message application;

parsing information fields within the intercepted electronic message to determine that the electronic message is one of a contact information request message transmitted in dependence upon the new contact being added to the electronic contact information database and another message;

generating a new electronic message including data indicative of current contact information for the new contact in reply to a determined contact information request message;

providing all other messages for storage within the inbox; and

transmitting the generated new electronic message to the user system via the communication network.

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10.   (original)   A method according to claim 9 wherein the new electronic message is generated by the automated reply filter using contact information retrieved from a memory accessible to the automated reply filter.

11.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 10 absent a step of storing the received electronic message within the inbox.

12.   (original)   A method according to claim 9 comprising the steps of:
     receiving the transmitted new electronic message at the user system;
     automatically extracting from the received new electronic message the current contact information for the new contact; and,
     automatically storing the extracted current contact information in association with other contact information relating to the new contact within the contact database of the user system.

13.   (original)   A method of adding a new contact to an electronic contact information database of a user system comprising the steps of:
     automatically transmitting an electronic message from the user system to a system of the new contact via a communication network and in dependence upon the new contact being added to the electronic contact information database, the electronic message being identified for interception by an automated reply filter in execution on the system of the new contact;
     receiving at the user system a new electronic message generated by the automated reply filter in response to the electronic message and transmitted via the communication network, the new electronic message including current contact information retrieved from a memory accessible to the automated reply filter;
     automatically extracting from the received new electronic message the current contact information for the new contact; and,
     automatically storing the extracted current contact information in association with other contact information relating to the new contact within the electronic contact information database of the user system.

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14.   (original)   A method of adding a new contact to an electronic contact information database comprising the steps of:

a)   storing within an electronic contact information database of a user a new contact having a contact destination; and

b)   automatically sending a message requesting further contact information to the contact destination of the new contact.

15.   (original)   A method according to claim 14 comprising the step of:

c)   upon receiving a return message with further contact information from the new contact, automatically updating the contact information database with the further contact information.

16.   (original)   A method according to claim 15 wherein the message is an electronic message and wherein step c) includes the step of:

automatically extracting the further contact information from the received return electronic message.

17.   (original)   A method according to claim 16 wherein the user is a subscriber to a contact list update service and wherein the new contact is other than a subscriber to the contact list update service.

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